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Further considering the illustrated shaving system or razor assembly and its operation, the pivot frame 14, essentially comprises an extension of the razor handle (not shown), and cooperates with the pivot assembly 12 to form a shell bearing which supports the pivot assembly 12 for arcuate rocking movement on and relative to the pivot frame 14 about a virtual axis or system pivot axis located above both the pivot frame and the pivot assembly. This virtual axis, which comprises the pivot axis of the shaving system is substantially fixed relative to the pivot frame 14 and the razor handle (not shown). The system's pivot axis is shown in Fig. 7 and indicated by the letter X.

The blade assembly 10, which includes the three blades 20, 22 and 24, the cap 16, and the guard bar 18, is supported for limited pivotal movement about a fixed axis on the pivot assembly 12, the latter axis being defined by cooperation of the outwardly projecting semi-cylindrical bosses 32 and 34 carried by the pivot assembly 12 and received in the inwardly open sockets 26 formed in the blade assembly 10. Thus, the blade assembly 10 is supported for pivotal movement on the pivot assembly 12 about a fixed axis and through an angle of 45 degrees between the stop surfaces 28 and 30 on the sockets 26 and coengagable abutment surfaces on the bosses 32 and 34 between a first position of the blade assembly relatively to the pivot assembly, shown in Fig. 7, and a second position of the blade assembly relative to the pivot assembly, shown in Fig. 8. A biasing spring 11, which comprises the first biasing means, acts between the pivot assembly 12 and the blade assembly 10 to urge the blade assembly 10 toward and to its first position of Fig. 7.

The resilient cantilevered spring member 50 carried by the frame assembly 14 acts between the frame assembly 14 and the pivot assembly 12 to retain various moveable parts

of the razor in a static or rest position when the razor is not in use and also allows 20 degree pivotal movement of the razor assembly 10 in either direction of rotation from the rest position and about the axis C, the degree of movement being controlled by the aforementioned shell bearings which couple the pivot assembly to the pivot frame.

It should be noted that when the blade assembly 10 is in its first position (Fig. 7) the virtual or system axis X is located substantially within the shaving plane and coincident with the leading edge of the center blade 22 in the blade group 20-24. Light shaving force applied to the blade assembly 10 may cause pivotal movement of the blade assembly 10 in either direction of rotational movement about the system pivot axis X in response to changes in skin surface contour and skin surface irregularities encountered during a normal shaving stroke. Since the spring 11 is responsive to a greater applied shaving force than the cantilevered biasing member 50, the blade assembly 10 will remain in its first position while the applied shaving forces are light. However, upon application of a heavier shaving force, that is a force of sufficient magnitude to overcome the reactive force exerted by the biasing spring 11, the blade assembly 10 will commence moving in a clockwise direction from its first position of Fig. 7 toward and ultimately to its second position (Fig. 8) causing the leading edge of the center blade 22 to move out of coaxial alignment with the system pivot axis X and further causing the guard bar 18 to take a position coincident with the system pivot axis, the latter position of the guard bar being indicated at G in Fig. 8. Thus, the shaving system of the present invention is sensitive to applied shaving force and is adapted to automatically shift the blade assembly from a center blade pivot position to a guard bar pivot position to accommodate changes in the magnitude of applied shaving force during the normal shaving process.